



P O E M S

C. E. d'ARNOUX



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POEMS

Concordia
C. E. d'ARNOUX



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POEMS

THE GOOSEHERD

Through wooded dell gossips a brook,
To thousand rocks it speaks:
Through thousand trees that into look
Its noisy course it seeks.

There rests no pebble in its bed:—
Wilful it drags them on;
Yea millions it hath onward led,
To yonder rock upon.

It built an isle around the stone,
And yet upon its crown,
And over all the winds have blown
A blooming, verdant gown.

Under a veil of evergreen
That breathes the warming sun
A little cottage may be seen:—
Around the waters run.

Within the aged gooseherd lives;
He serves his office well,
And to his feath'ry flock he gives
The pasture 'long the dell.

His limbs are gnarled, his crown is snow,
He leans upon his stick;
For sightless eyes, where'er he'd go,
That flock the path must pick.

They swarm around his doubting tread,
Restrain their youthful fire.
And while they take "their daily bread"
They guard the ancient sire.

They know him well, and heed his word:
To them it is the law.
Of kinder sons you never heard,
Nor kinder daughters saw.

Yet happy naught, 'mid all this love
The gooseherd lonely pined:
He dreamt of her, now far above:—
Death had her warrant signed.

The leader-gosling knew the way
To yonder flow'ring grave;
And when the sun sank in the day
A sign to all he gave.

He led the sire along the road
Until they reached the place.
As tears would light the heavy load,
And trickle down the face,

And as the form bent to the grave
And kissed the earth upon;
Once more the sign the gosling gave:
Their way they wended on.

The weighty years, the cramping heart,
A sunless, wretched life
Defied of science th' anxious art,
Ended the weary strife.

The grave was built along the side
Where tears had grown to bloom.
There will both ashes now abide:—
The bride and yet the groom.

And as the sun sinks in the day
A sign the gosling gives;
And all that flock mourns on the way
To where the sire lives.

CONTENTMENT

The crow that gossips in the tree
Melodious as the thrush might be;
The burro shuffling 'long the way
A pedigree might to him lay.

In life one path we walk aside;—
Some go on foot, and some astride:—
Let each make haste as he may go,
And reach the goal, if high or low.

NIGHT

Ethereal blue now hems the crimson West;
The weary orb sinks sleepy to its rest.
And twinkling stars that bide the regal fall
Wax ever brighter on the sightless pall.

Abandoned now the trowel and the spade;
And panting man seeks of his home the shade.
The lusty bell intones the evening hour
And greedy hands the fleeting time devour.

Above the viands curls the soul of fire;
The hungry eye would slake its pent desire.
Both youth and age their praying hands will raise
And of the Giver all his bounty praise.

The lowing kine seek the accustomed way;
And bated toil soon rests in slumber's sway.
But aching hearts, relentless in their woe,
The dregs of grief will to their fullness know.

While eyeless night her mantle spreads above,
And, breathless, shrouds the mysteries of love,
Yon silvered rays search many a doting heart,
And weld the chain, that only death may part.

The thoughtful sage beside his midnight ray
Turns yawning night to sprightly halcyon day.
The weakling gleam:—'tis but a candle's soul,—
Of shiv'ring shadows steals the terror-role.

A lifeless clay in yonder coffin waits
Until the cooling grave the widowed grief abates.
And there a worried heart the hour counts
Before Aurora on her chariot mounts.

WOMAN'S RIGHTS

High waves the flag of Double-Rule:—
In 'twixt the bassos the treble we hear.
Hope died,—the fervor of woman to cool—
Crushed 'neath her foot writhes terror and fear.

Past are the pages, when women were slaves,
Levelled the markets where innocence blushed;
Over the squaw-days of service to "braves",—
Words of command forever are hushed.

Woman's no chattel for barter or sale.
"Wife" is her name; but has she no more?
"Mother" she may be,—true is the tale.
"Mind" she yet will be aft as before.

"Husband" is one name,—man hath a score;
"Father" though he may be, that's not his all.
"King" has he also played, inside his door,
Made woman bend the knee, before him fall.

Days were when that was right,—from manly
might;
Pow'r came from high above, kings ruled by God.
That sun hath dipped his rays into the night;—
That doctrine buried rests under the sod.

Woman is full-endowed with reason's ray;
She is nor deaf nor blind, no babe in pow'r;
Needs not a man to lead, or point the way,
Can taste the sweet herself, and so the sour.

Doll-days are over quite,—'tis good and well:—
Woman's no more a pet on chain, in cage,
That man, on market days, might buy and sell:—
Of that we read amazed on hist'ry's page.

We love the dulcet sweet,—man smokes the while;
We paint and sing a bit,—man lolls the streets:—
Nature hath many rays,—refined and vile:
She mixes in our meat bitter and sweets.

Why not complete this world:—have day and
night?—

Man loved to sing alone,—heard his own voice;—
Now, 'tis a chorus sings together right,—
Rhythmic, harmonious too, not just a noise.

Now then I hear a cry, warning in tone:—
"Let woman 'tend her house, and stay at home;
That is a woman's right, that is her zone.
Let her the pot keep warm until "he" come.

She hath her children too,—they need be trained;
She must the washing do, and cook the meals;
To dust the house and sweep, she is constrained.
To clean her husband's shoes, and yet the heels."

These days we hire maids to wash and cook;
Is there a law that's writ, to make a drudge
Of either man or wife?—Show me that book,—
Telling how "she" must slave, little or much.

Nurse girls the children 'tend, after they're out.
No mother will forget her helpless mite,—
Fathers are just as much, as wives about,
Forced to train children straight, and teach them
right.

Abject in slavery woman hath lived:
Husbands her lords and kings, lashed her to serve.
Now Nature made her see her native gift:
She no more bares the back,—the quiv'ring nerve.

She hath forgotten long to wince with fear,
His voice no terror brings, nor his command:
Only the gentle word will reach her ear,
Love is her only law, affection's band.

Time was when just a tool she for his whims.
Nature uplifted her, over that pool;
In its polluted flood no more she swims—
He that would tempt her back, a knave or fool!

Turks may still live and lust, their wives abase:
Liberty's beacon-arc dispels our night.
Hail to her mastery, hail to her rays!
They searched our darkest shades, turned them to
light.

THE VICES

'Tis night!—The clammy terrors crawl
With myriad clammy legs.—
The dragon-clouds have eaten all
The timid stars, the specks!

The trembling earth gapes foul and wide:
A cloud of sulphur spouts;
And in the cloud the demons ride
'Mid dev'lish hoots and shouts.

This is the hour the demons meet
A hellish conclave hold—
Each in his lava-crackling seat;
The throne is molten gold.

Between, the table is of fire,—
It spits and fumes and scolds;
There, in his throne, the demon-sire
That mystic concourse holds.

Within his right the thunderbolt,
And serpent-tongues his crown:
'T is only demons may behold
That awful demon-frown.

Before the King, a crown of sin,
With tears 'tis studded o'er—
The cleverest prince that crown will win
That racks the mortals more.

About the table seat them down
The princes of the hell:
Wrap all around the fiery gown;
Then of their feats they tell.

Next to the hellish king sits Pride,
A lofty front he bears;
A flaming ladder at his side
A crown of flame he wears.

"There's not a prince of hell", he quoth,
"That serves the Master's bid—
Not even Lust, or demon Sloth,—
As I his bidding did.

"I nest within ambitious souls,
Gaze through ambitious eyes;
Then stir ambition's sleeping coals.
Yet better means devise.

"I place the flaming ladder here
Near the ambitious foot.
Above, I hold a bauble-sphere,
The climber's easy loot.

"The ladder I most cautious place,
As their suspicion cools,—
I would not ever show my face:—
And then they climb, the fools!—

"And from their height I bid them scorn
Those who on humbler plane,
Whose bleeding foot the rocks have torn,
Yet lowly will remain.

"And as they rise from rung to rung,
The finger near the crown;
And as they stretch the eager tongue,
That hungers for renown,

"I'll lift the bauble higher still
Until they reach the top;
There, reaching high, the fools will reel,
And to the bottom drop.

"A fire I kindle in the breast
That burns the virtue-horde,
Makes them despise and hate the rest,
That serve not thee, my Lord.

"Now tell, my King, have I not earned
The crown within thy gift?
Have I not joy to mis'ry turned,
A storm without a rift?"

Then slowly, on her crook of fire,
Arose the princess of Lust:—
Applause thrilled through that demon-choir
As heaved that demon-bust.

Her tresses steeped in inky night
Refracted serpent-sheen;
With serpent-heads darted her sight,—
The voice hissed serpentine.

"Prince Pride merits the praise of all
That list his noble word:
He makes the stupid mortal fall,
As he has just referred.

"My mission is of wider scope:
All Man is in my mesh.
I catch him with a curious rope
That I lay in the flesh.

"I need no tool to ply my trade:
I turn and squirm like this:
And all the flesh of woman made
My scales will, fervent, kiss.

"The cowardice of Brother Pride!—
His face he'd never show;—
And in his mantle must he hide
As he the bait will throw.

"I glide among, in day, forsooth,
And coil about my mesh,
Open the mouth, and show the tooth,
Then bite the willing flesh.

"While roving o'er the face of earth
I found a curious thorn;
It stings the flesh,—that is its worth,—
And is of woman born.

"'Tis pain and pleasure,—each a bit,—
A wondrous mixture this!
Lasts but a second, most of it;
Yet Man deems it a bliss.

"Pride waits for snows,—the babe I take,—
Beside the cradle kneel;
The flesh with luring fingers rake,
And then that thorn instill.

"Right from the cradle through the school
I watch my early crop;
And in my stead I pick a fool
To water it on top.

"I lure the sickly frame and face
To secrecy and shame.
That thorn will prick him ev'ry place,
And sap his godly frame.

"Then blanch a strand, and paint a lip,
That gives the poison-dose;
And from it man will joyful sip
The poison-death he knows.

"Under the very scythe of Death
He'll prick him with that thorn;
He'll prick him to his dying breath,
That fool of woman born.

"I care not if he wear a crown
Of laurel or of gold;
Whether his be a toga-gown,
Or fetid rags, and old.

"My thorn lives under any robe,
And any crown my sting.
Whether the home be of adobe,
Or palace of a king.

"Dear legal lore helps in my task,
It bids that thorn to sting,
Makes it, in love, to thrive and bask;
And o'er the church-bells ring.

"Man gives his all, and then himself
For just one second's "bliss".
Affection, duty, he will shelve
Just for one serpent-kiss.

"And when the snows of age will fall,
He still will, feebly, dote:

The flesh is weak,—fancy is all
With which that thorn to coat.

“Pride lifts the mortal heavenward,
I sink him in a grave;
He makes him ape the soaring bird,—
The worms, I make him brave.

“I wrought, on earth, a wond’rous strife
With just my tiny thorn:
With war and murder it is rife,
And jealousy, hate and scorn.

“And now, my King, I’ve said, in part,
How I have mis’ry brought
And ills, and death to human heart;
The crown, I want, or naught!”

“I have not wrought for princely crown;—
Just of my task I tell.
Methinks, Friend Lust hath easy shown,
That she’s the queen of hell.”

Thus quoth a grinning form in turn
That next to Lust arose.
Right in his paunch a worm would squirm,
Within those lizzard-clothes.

His waist-coat was a curious patch:
A portrait of a swine;
The dripping spot, the lip should catch
Of viand or of wine.

The blotches reeked a yellow-green,
A wine-list and *menus*,

With dishes, pots, and flames between,
And spots of slimy grease.

"I nested in the human frame
A hung'ring, hank'ring worm;
They call it 'appetite' by name;—
I know a better term.

"I make the foolish mortal lush,
And wallow in the mire;
Burn off the early manhood-blush
To sate a vile desire.

"The thinking mind I wrap about
With fumes of beastly brews;
Make him a filthy gutter-lout,
And to the beast reduce.

"He passes life 'mid drunken spreeds,
Then at the gate of death
With horror and remorse he sees,
He breathed but poison-breath.

"He knows nor poetry, nor love,
The world he never saw:
The golden sun, the stars above,
Nor home, nor life, nor law.

"A free man born, a slave he lived:
He loved the stinging lash;
And cast away the manhood-gift
Before himself abashed.

"Yet not just him I bend to shame:
The darlings of the home
I strip of pride, and friend, and name:—
Naked in slums they roam.

"And on the child I burned a mark
That brands the dastard breed;
Crippled the frame, wiped out the spark,
And sowed the alien-seed.

"The teaching-rod I seized upon
And taught that appetite
Was of the motor-springs the one
To move the human mite.

"Like Mother Lust the babe I seize:
It lives but just to eat.
In adolescent days I freeze
All but the motive Meat.

"I blur the eye, and bloat the face,
The paunch I hang before;
The worm a dragon grows apace,
That eats forever more.

"The hunger-tooth, in maddened race,
Will eat the mind and all:
The heart within the stomach placed
Will make the mortal fall.

"I want no crown, no wreath, no praise;
My task I never shirk;
The standard of destruction raise,
Abomination work."

A form sprang from her fiery seat,
As Glutt'ny waved the hand:
The youngest in a demon-seat,
The clev'rest in the band.

She was of comely demon-face,
Her hair with tinsel shone,
And on her features, ev'ry trace
Had studded-in a stone.

They were but false,—naught but of paste,
But glistened in the light.
Alluring brilliants 'round the waist,—
A stone slept in her right.

The body curved as curves the snake,
The tinsel-eyes were gold,—
The figure Eight her shape would take,
As she her story told.

Right from her belt there floated bags,
Within but air,—a naught;
Her mouth a bag that brays and brags;
The limbs with pouches fraught.

“The nothingest creature is the air,—
No crown, no thorn, no worm;—
The prize I claim, for see me dare
Grow vice without a germ.

“I blight the frame and yet the mind
With Nothing as a tool;
With Nothing eagle-eyes I blind,
With Nothing mortals fool.

“I blow them into fever heat,
There's Nothing in my bag;
With Nothing tie the struggling feet,
Bid them to Nothing drag.

“And as a giant-mind I spy
I lay it low with air:

Into the sun I make him fly;—
There melt the wings,—the pair.

“I flatter him that did and wrought,
And make him grin with joy.
He that a worthy battle fought,—
I play with him,—a toy.

“All Man is in my airy pow’r,
A herd of jabb’ring apes;
The greater the mind, the finer the flow’r,
The emptier it gapes.

“The windows of the shops I drape
With doll and colored rag;
Before, the thousand women gape,
And, gaping, never fag.

“They buy the rag and put it on
The form that Nature gave;
Spoils Nature’s lines, one after one;
And Nature’s anger brave.

“They turn and squirm before the glass
To fit in fashion’s way.
Dame Nature no more knows her lass,—
Such havoc fashions play.

“I lift them on a pair of stilts,
And crush the waist to naught;
A mattress on the tresses wilts
The cov’ring Nature brought.

“I make my stupids live for dress:
That is their life in all.
They love it and the snake caress
That lures them to their fall.

"They're no more women, mothers, now,—
They're dolls dressed in a rag;
Forget the solemn altar-vow,
And after fashion drag.

"Their minds are filled with color-schemes,
They no more see the world;
The roll of love and poet-themes
Is 'round a paint-staff furled.

"And when they die, an empty hand
Meets emptier still a gaze,—
As naught they sowed into the land,
They must on nothing graze.

"I won my prize, I'm sure, my Lord,
I lured more bitter tears,
And spoiled what crop the virtue-horde
Had petted many years."

Down smote the mighty thunderbolt,
The king with ire arose:—
"Too lengthy is your story told;—
These scrolls the conclave close:—

"The *Sycophant* paints sympathy
And tears in laughing eyes;
Then sounds his trumpet cheerily
To show, how Char'ty cries.

"*Envy* consumes the feeling bow'ls,
The bitter soul she eats.
Greenish at others' luck she scowls,
And then her feast repeats.

"This scroll tells of the feats of *Lie*:
Longish the story reads;
Ev'n our pow'r he would defy;—
Then for the prize he pleads:

"No one resists his clever schemes;
'Gainst him no lock is made;
And feuds and hate spring from his dreams:—
All lips fall to his trade.

"Yon scowling *Hate* breaks many a heart,
He kindles deep his flame;
The friendly pair he tears apart;
And wordy wars his game.

"He strews the plains with glory's dead,
And drapes the widowed veil.
'To noose, or yet a hoary head
His tricks and schemes avail.

"Miss *Calumny* tells of her wiles,
How, secret, she inserts
Her prickling thorn 'mid tears and smiles:
And friends to foes converts.

"The turtle *Sloth* I must commend:
Makes late to live and die.
As late she starts them, late they end;
In squalid tracks they lie.

"And yonder glitt'ring Love of *Gold*
Tells of his task and fame—
"Your Majesty,—your story hold:
I'll speak as *Pride* the same."

"The stories, we have listened tell
Are marvels to behold.

Yet none worked just by half so well,
As did this demon Gold.

"Of all ye princes, here convened,
Not one but heeds my word;
My flag shades ev'ry demon-fiend
That ever mis'ry stirred.

"*Pride* serves me well—he drapes the fold
Th' ungainly fools around,
Weaves into it my shiny *gold*
That makes them strut the ground.

"*Lust* buys the millions with my coin,
She builds her trade above:
Business with passion see her join:
With *gold* she buys the love.

"*Gold* stirs the hungry *Envy*-worm
That gnaws the soul and heart;
Under my rays you see it squirm,—
Then eat the vital part.

"*Hate* walks on crutch and stick,—you see
Those props are laid in *gold*;
And in his cunning deviltry
My work you may behold.

"The scheme of Brother *Sycophant*:—
To buy a crown with *gold*;
Then draw his hard and icy hand
As 'round the mite it fold.

"*Dishonesty* looks through my mask:
Gold is her lasting theme;
She could not do her worthy task
Without my golden gleam.

"For in the thief, embezzler too
The finger lusts for *gold*;
The robber and the foot-pad woo
The sheen that purses hold.

"Why should I name our *Avarice*,
Who hoards, and stints the bite:
Gold is the only real bliss
Within his leather-hide.

"For gold he sells the loving heart,
He sells his soul and mind;
Even his life he will discard,—
In gold his comfort find.

"Prince *Discord* is my very page:—
He steady bides my heel.
You'll find in ev'ry discord-rage
Of *gold* the potent seal.

"E'en *Calumny* doth serve me well:
Gold is a motor-pow'r
As shadows of her hidden spell
Creep over friendship's flow'r.

"I stole from Love his mystic dart,
Made him a credit-wight:
He wounds no more the craving heart,—
Casts on the purse his light.

"I caught that creature Charity,
And tied her to a stake:—
Hands only give for love of me
And not for charity's sake.

"And all the virtue-horde I've foiled:
As they reach for their crown

Into the crown my sheen I toiled
Made them work for renown.

"Even our latest friend *Divorce*
Serves me as serve you all:
His law he rarely will enforce
Until for *gold* he call."

Before the Love of Gold had ceased
To tell the story's half,
How misery he had increased
With all his demon-staff,

The princes rose with one accord,
And voted Gold the crown,—
Of hell the chief and under-lord—
He grinned with dev'lish frown.

The air was filled with sulphur-smoke,
The walls with serpents hissed;
Then roared the king with lightning-stroke
As Love of Gold he kissed.

And in his claw he lifts the crown
Above the faithful squire;
And with his awful demon-frown
Thus spake the hellish sire:

"Ye princes all have wrought your trade,
And crisped the life of Man.
The wimp'ring mortal you have flayed,
As only demons can.

"Make him forget the earth about
To pet a dastard vice;
Put all the virtue-horde to rout
That with the demon vies.

“Right from the cradle lift the hand
That strikes the mother-breast;
Weave into Nature’s fam’ly band
Of hate the hellish crest.

“Root out that pest Authority;
Decrepitude call age;
A curious rag the flag must be;
Laugh at the moralist-sage.

“Wrest from the heart of chivalry
The vestige and the grace,
A blind, ignoble rivalry
Will fill the vacant space.

“Sow in the heart but discontent:
A bloody harvest reap!
Have poverty, on pleasure bent,
Through wealthy windows peep.

“Watch at the door where fools will wed,
Point to the door Divorce:—
The wanton word, that Pride has fed,
Will ready change the course.

“The world make reek with war and strife,
In home and yet in field:
Slaughter the adolescent life,
And desolation wield.

“Ideals, bloom and poetry
Sweep from the skeleton-earth:—
Blast child-life—early let them see
Life’s misery and dearth.

“Burn out the fibre, life and sap:
The world a clinker make;

Let hunger those that hungry gap;
No tongue its thirst must slake.

"I want the world a hell to be:
And you to make it so.
Hateful the sight of man to me—
Burn him with pain and woe."

A puff of smoke, a demon-yell,—
The gaping earth was closed.
And of the conclave of the hell
The weary night reposed.

The stars peeped timid 'round the cloud;
Then glittered glad again.
The hush of peace wrapped in its shroud
The land and yet the main.

DIVORCE

Why tremble tears on yonder lash,
Why throbs the frame with grief?
'Tis but a day that eye would flash,
Before decree and brief.

That doubting heart—it loves him still:—
They saw and wooed and wed
A wanton word that love would kill,
Put hatred in its stead.

It draped a shroud about that love,—
Beneath it liveth still;—
And placed a mighty stone above
The love it meant to kill.

Arise, oh love, from out the grave,
And burst its clammy walls;
Tear off the shroud that anger gave:
To life the bugle calls.

Thy home is not 'mid lifeless dead,
Not in the crawling grave;
The crown of life shines on thy head;
Arise, for once be brave!

Rap at the heart that drove thee far,
And take thy place again;
And let not grief thy beauty mar,
Thy eye with anguish stain!

And throw thy arm around the form,
The arm once loved so well;
Kiss from the soul the scowling storm,
Of love, devotion tell.

There is no wall so closely built,
No ray will pass it through;
There is no heart so dastard-willed
But it will love anew.

SAVED

The waters moaned, the girders groaned,
The sailors cleared the deck;—
The captain's word was stern intoned:—
They flew to do his beck.

The sea did groan the ship did moan,
And we in terror wept;
And not a soul that tempest night
For shiv'ring fear hath slept.

Just then the moon rose in the right,—
The sky in rags did hang;
The Norther swept them in its might:—
Between, the lightning sprang.

Ill omened red still fringed the storm
That tossed across the ship.
There was nor thing, nor yet its form
That stood against its whip.

The sails first taut were ripped and shred,
The masts sighed, bent,—then fell;
The ocean screamed, cursed and fretted
Like demons out of hell.

There was no front that e'er would brave
Those sinews of the air:—
And he that braved, dashed to his grave
In hungered fathoms there.

The sea was white that frenzied night:
One crest it seemed all o'er;
The timid moon peeped with her light
Through rifts and crags no more.

The human mass had crouched in fear;
The shiv'ring lover kissed
From shiv'ring lids the shiv'ring tear;—
And out, the storm-wind hissed.

The captain's words replete with cheer:
His ship,—he trusted her;—
'T would be an hour, the sky would clear,
The North would cease to stir.

Yet, while he spake the trembling tone
Belied his honest mind.
And then again the ship would moan,
And lusty howl the wind.

The waters grinned and laughed at us;
Full many a face I saw,—
The hungry teeth they snapped at us,
And hooked the hungry claw.

The teeth bit eager plank by plank,
The claw seized on the deck:—
And bit by bit the vessel sank,—
The weary, battered speck.

The fiendish waves leaped o'er the board,—
They hardly more would wait
Till all of life and all the hoard
Their appetite should sate.

We could not pray,—our hearts were dust,—
And thought of naught but self.
And lingered wait until a gust
The ship would downward delve.

The bits of mast that still did last
We picked them from the wind;

And made a raft and tied it fast:—
And on, the souls did bind.

The ship careened, and turned, and twist
Before it final sank.
We loosed the raft, and through the mist
Shoved far the hoping plank.

We forced the monsters carry us:—
The drop before the lip,—
And saw them tug and fume and fuss
Until they ate our ship.

Where last she sank we saw a pall
Of white, the fiends had laid;—
In shame to see their victim fall
A tribute they had paid.

And o'er that pall a crown they raised,—
It sparkled white and green.
And that's the last of our ship
That we have ever seen.

Tied to the raft we tossed about;—
Now up, now down we went.
Voracious waves in glee would shout
As downward we were bent.

Before that mouth could crush the mite
A greedier lip would snatch;—
Down on the savouring tongue we'd slide,
A helpless, screaming batch.

And thus from mouth to mouth we sped:—
Not one would swallow it,—
Not one its hunger on us fed,—
But to the next would spit.

There were of us full thirty souls,
Tied to that raft with tows.
And how it pitches, how it rolls,—
When down, it upward rose.

My love, she was too far abaft
To hear my words of hope;
For, at the side, to steer the raft,
I held me by a rope.

Her wond'rous eye though followed me
Where'er my duty called;
My dangers all it seemed to see,
And frequent looked appalled.

That eye would glint in by-gone days,
When at a brook we mused.
Its waters sparkled poet-lays,—
Not in a caldron fused.

The days were young as love was born,—
We felt its sweet embrace.
Now see us far asunder torn
Where fury knows no grace.

The light still lingers of the sun
That warmed the throbbing hearts;
The nest that love within hath spun
Still healing warmth imparts.

That day we thought eternity,—
Till down the sun did go;
And from the crests we turned to see
Of hope the ruddy glow.

The waves now wearied of the strife
Slept calmly all around;

And no more threat the terror-life
That on that raft was bound.

The captain was a man of thought:—
For food and water too
He to the hopeful craft had brought;
For us and for the crew.

We did not pick the food we ate,
Nor cavil at the draught:
Our craving we would thankful sate
On that foresaken raft.

The day was slow, it passed us though;
The night in gloom would brew;
Again the sun his way would go,
And bid us hope renew.

The water first came to its dregs,—
Enough for one to drink;—
And if the famished nature begs,
We dared not make it shrink.

The water-angel saw our need,
And sent a mist at night;
And from the sheet with hungered greed
We gathered it, the mite.

And laid the parching tongue upon,—
To quench our raving thirst;
And all the drops that freely run
The women had them first.

The sun went down, the sun arose,
Still saw we ne'er a sign.
We made a flag from our clothes,
And scanned the water-line.

And if I live a thousand years,
That night I'll ne'er forget:—
We thirsty drank the bitter tears
That hopeless anguish shed.

That was a throng of maniacs,—
The thirst had made them so.
They forced the captain to relax,
And drained the dregs below.

And yet a day and yet a night:—
No tongue can tell our woe;—
And then we saw a darling light
Through night and shadow glow.

Ah, how we loved that tiny ray!
It glimmered yet so far.
That was for us a golden day,—
Of life the boding star.

Alas!—'twas night:—they could not see
The tiny, rayless speck.
Heedless the light, we saw it flee
This handful from the wreck.

Then was it better not to stay,
And with our ship to sink?
Than live, and not our thirst allay,—
And ne'er a drop to drink.

The list of dead, I saw it not:—
The raft became so still!—
I weakly fell,—my breath was hot:—
The raft it went at will.

My breast was tight,—I panted fast,—
My sense was gone, I know;

I felt a chill that upward passed,
And froze the warming glow.—

A weeping sound, it reached my ear :—
The voice, I knew it well :—
Full many a day I thrilled to hear
That voice of love to tell.

I could not lift the lid of eye,
But through, the day I'd see.
A loving arm, despairing sigh,—
I felt them over me.

A stouter voice, yet firm, yet calm !—
I feel me upward lift ;—
And at my lip the heaven-balm,—
God's easy greatest gift.

Now on the ground,—I kiss the place,—
My helpless form they lay :—
A gurgling brook washed o'er my face
And quenched the burning clay.

The life that brooklet breathed in me
Did open wide my lid :—
Before, the kneeling form I see,
That back to love hath bid.

Though stern the features gathered 'round,—
How sweet their frown to see !—
They drew the raft full on the ground,—
And found but her and me.

RESCUED

It is a night, the poet sings:—
On high the moon ethereal swings;
And of her horns the silver face
Swims rhythmic thru the heaven-space.

The drowsy stars above do blink,
And, half-asleep, their lashes wink;—
There see the Hunter and the Chair,
The Dipper and of Friends the pair.

Yonder the Cross above the line,
And here the serpents intertwine.
List, hear the music of the skies,
Which in their silence harmonize.

They wonder, what the grief might be:—
For many a tear they glisten see;—
It glistens here, it glistens there,—
The pearls are shimm'ring ev'rywhere.

The arching breast, they see it heave,—
'Twixt hill and dale a rhythm weave.
There gurgles, still awake, a brook:—
It sings from nature's music book.

Here, blinking, groans the waking owl,
There hungry wolves will, distant, howl.
Through yonder branches lisps the breeze,
As from the Norther's lash it flees.

The sleepy town—they left it blind—
And ne'er a light,—a mile behind.
The prancing steed knows well the way,
Which through that silvered valley lay.

Here on his breast there leans the form,
A beaten branch from out the storm,—
Her hoping eye turns up to his;—
But on the lash a tear he sees.

And from those girlish, purring lips
The honey of the heart he sips.
The tear, not bitter,—sweet it is,—
As from her eye the pearl he'd kiss.

Accustomed arms arch 'round his breast,
Caressing, in their loving zest.
And deft the fingers seek the heart,—
Not even death from hers will part.

And thus they sped a many a mile,
Caressed and fondling all the while.
The breeze that erst would, childish, play
Knew but of love the ardent lay.

And in a voiceless whisper sang
To sleep the earth with all its pang.
Its treble now hummed deep and strong,—
No more a pleasure was its song.

Far, on his wings, astride the North
Rode from his icy caverns forth.
Though, valiant, long the moon had fought,—
Her struggle all had come to naught:—

The savage king had drawn a pall
Over the halo'd stars and all.
Still far away, they heard the horde:—
A lusty yell, in wild accord.

Then ever nearer came the sound,—
As o'er the mountain-way they wound.
Ah,—yet so far they had to go,—
After that steed,—now shiv'ring-slow.

The icy needles 'round them flew,
And from the pore the life-blood drew.
And fiercer, ever fiercer roared
The North-king and his lusty horde.

Then downy flakes the forehead kissed,—
While in between the storm-wind hissed.
The frosted lustre of the gem,
Reluctant, would that fury stem.

The heavens fled, 'mid seething cloud,
And wrapped about the path a shroud.
One could not see the narrow way,
Which o'er the mountain, covered, lay.

And icy fingers clutched them o'er,—
To make their progress even slow'r.
Rocked by the fiends, they onward reeled;
And on the lip e'en love congealed.

Wrapped in his breast he held that form
To ward away the awful storm.
And as they rocked, and as they rolled,
Her arm would tighter 'round him hold.

And deeper, ever deeper stepped
The steed, who still direction kept.
But soon, up to his very flank
In snow, the struggling pilot sank.

Slow down the mountain-skirt they crept
To where another valley slept.

They did not see the savior-spire,
Nor yet the bluish curl of fire.

The fingers stung them in the glove,
Though covered, deep, with fur above.
Their limbs were chilled and shivered cold,
Though thrice around the covers rolled.

Now nearly down into the vale,—
They saw nor road, nor pike, nor trail.
The panting steed was forging still,
And dragged them down that terror-hill.

A step amiss through fathom bank,—
And dead the steed into it sank.
'Twas but the will had lent him strength
Down all that drifted mountain-length.

The wind did howl, the heavens scowl;
Yet deeper in his awful cowl
The storm-king covered o'er his prey;—
And not of hope one struggling ray!—

But love was strong, and young the heart,—
And with the trapper's needful art
He dug the snow unto the ground,—
And there a ledge he, lucky, found.

Under its cov'ring shield he lift,
Through mountain-snow and heaven-drift,
That precious load within his arms,—
To rescue yet those angel-charms!—

But terror with them into stepped;
And with their hope death's angel crept:

The path which, panting, he had made
Was prompt by fawning snows o'erlaid.

And though he fought the tempest-foe,
The fevered task soon laid him low.
He could not stir nor arm, nor foot,—
And all around destruction stood!—

The storm-king whom he had defied
Had his advantage soon espied:
He closed the gate, and snatched the key,—
And laughed to scorn their misery.

They felt the grave,—its crawling mould,
And all its terrors, never told;—
Struggling in death he lay him down:—
Then, o'er his breast, he felt her crown.

Her warming breath dealt life and hope:—
See with the fiends again him cope;—
He batters down the flimsy gate:
And makes the waning hope elate.

Hark!—hearest not the terror-bark
Of hungry wolves, that scent the ark?
Yes,—lambent tongues and pointed ears,
There at the mouth confirm their fears.

Their eyes are coals;—they howl and growl
And with those glaring coals they scowl.
Was it then better here to die,
Than in Siberia's prisons lie?—

He had nor weapon,—any arm
To guard her from that brutal harm.

His frosted sinews were not strong
So many hungered beasts among.

He bid his love bide in the shade,
Until an effort he had made.
Then to the snowy door he stepped,
And to the ground its mass he swept.

That was a flimsy barricade
That storm and he had hurried made.
And in that awful deadly race
His eager hand touched what?—a face!—

That face, it grew,—then chest and limbs:—
A sprite from heav'n it almost seems!
And "Oscar", "Claire" two voices rang;—
And never angels sweeter sang.

And through the snow, now overflown,
Which from the heavens the wind had mown,
The rescued and their saviors four
Followed the dogs,—not wolves,—before.

His Claire had saved the loving spouse
From far Siberia's charnel-house;
Had sped to friendly freedom's light,—
But felt the freezing Norther-might.

Her brother 'twas, who exiled lived
Had saved them from the smoth'ring drift.
The sun awoke,—his glorious ray
Gilded their youthful freedom-day.

FORSAKEN

The widowed veil,—the features gashed,—
Not by the claw of years,—
One cruel word her hopes had dashed,
Had bathed her cheek in tears.

A sun of love,—and ne'er an eye
To drink its ray, and live;
A heart of fire,—why burns it?—Why?
If it no warmth may give?

The fondling arms will, eager, clasp,
Within that empty space,—
Hold phantoms in their loving grasp,
But not a loving face.

The arching lips are sweet to kiss,
Under high heaven's sun!—
Yet there is none to sip the bliss
In ecstasy,—not one!—

The bosom swells in mother-joy—
Ah, for those baby-arms!—
They are for her a fable-toy,—
Not living, prattling charms.

The rosy cot hath shed its leaves,—
There's nothing left but thorns.
Remorse the dreary cover weaves;
In tears the pillow mourns.

The light of sun,—it stings the sense;—
The shadows, hence, she seeks:—
The shadow clammy, damp and dense,—
With crawling terrors reeks.

The sprouting earth grins green with hate;
The stars drink from the cup,—
Inebriate their craving sate,—
And stagger down and up.

The sharpest thorn that stings the heart:—
'Twas but a wanton word,—
An empty breath yet did it part
The love the altar heard.

ODE TO THEODORE ROOSEVELT

Hail, Chieftain, hail! Home to thy native strands,
From far-off wilds and arid sands!
Proud of the laurel we, that thou hast worn,—
Thou bringst it back, by not a recreant torn.
The laurel, aye, wound by Columbia's hands,
In triumph carriedst it through royal lands.
We're proud of it, and proud of him that wore
Its twining leaves so many thrones before.
A tactful mind, and courage without fear
Brought grace to Thee, and honor to thy gear.

And now we have Thee back, in our midst once
more,
Most welcome traveller to Columbia's shore,—
The honored son of honored mother Thou:—
We'll add one laurel more upon thy brow.
We hunger for the honey, thou hast sucked
From every flower that on thy way hast plucked.
And of the blossoms we shall wind a crown,
Before Columbia's feet to proudly lay it down.
The honey sweet Columbia quaffs it glad,
Praises her son, her plucky, daring lad.

AN ANSWER

Deep down in each American heart
There is a love for bow and dart:—
As boys o'er Cooper's Western Tales
We raved. The pluck that never fails
Made us admire his daring chiefs.
A sturdy chap his post of honor leaves
To lead Rough Riders into war:—
He knows no fear,—halts at no bar;
Runs in the Nation's highest race
And wins an easy victor's place;
Attacks the trusts and money-kings;
Calls "Ananias",—ugly things
To honored men, whom name and grace
Beyond the pale of insult place.
And when he tires of White House glare
To Africa he takes a fare;
Right through the jungle tears his way,—
The king of beasts he kills at bay;
And, after, visits Egypt's throne,—
Makes his opinions freely known;—
And if they soothe, or if they smart:—
He'll say it all and not a part.
From thence he goes to Europe's courts,
Inspects the armies and the forts.
At kingly grave he sheds a tear;
Tells, how the ship of State to steer.
And then he faces once more west,—
His popularity to test—
'Tis such a man that wins the heart,—
His pluck,—not diplomatic art.
You ask the grounds, why Roosevelt stands
Admired and feared through all the lands?—
I answer you:—" 'Tis pluck," in verse;—
And many a one in prose did worse.

AVIATION

And now of aviation let me sing—
'Tis but a while since such a thing
As horseless carriage you have jeered,—
Yet nothing simpler has appeared.
We need no horse, nor living thing:—
Machine and gasoline's the king.
Do I mistake?—The wise ones laughed,—
And even Bell they epitaphed.
"Why, such machines" some other said,
"Are but volcanoes, black and red".
Still others, "that with such a speed
There's no one life and limb can heed"
Yea, even doctors warning gave:—
"No science such a fool can save!"
Fond mothers told their daughters fair:—
Such "antics" were for them a snare.
Yet ev'ryone in auto rides:
The coffin just as well as brides,—
The silvered lock, the childish curl,
And many a lover with his girl.
So it will turn with aeroplane:—
The scoffers all their necks will crane
To see the "fools" above them soar,
Gain time and dollars,—which is more.
Why should we not the air employ,
Of earth the upper view enjoy?
'Tis but a question of machine:—
That skill can conquer as we've seen.
We are as good as birds in air,
Can make ourselves of wings a pair,—
We were as good as fish in wave,—
To horses' speed the odds we gave.
We've learned, the lightning to employ,
And many comforts now enjoy;

For safety all our ships we dress
With the "impossible" wireless.
What man can't do we dare not say:—
Old cities we dig out of clay;
Under the wave the stones we place,—
On them a bridge, a palace raise.
You say, 'tis far to yonder moon;—
Perchance we'll go that distance soon,
Run up to military Mars
Some aero—or electric cars.
A distance that by thousands goes,
To us no more than school-boys' throws.
If skilled invention goes ahead
We'll even raise the noted dead.

I WONDER, HOW THEY KNOW?

I am a little curly lad,—
The curls with nature came,—
They often tell me, I am bad
And yet I'm aye the same:
I love the sweet, and like to play,
Crave what is good. Yet people say,
I'm naughty and must mend;
Or else with bad boys I shall end
In hell with Satan, down below.—
I wonder, how they know.

I peer into the rounded sky,
And look behind each star,
To see, where doth that heav'n lie
Which naughty boys will bar;
That heav'n, filled with angels bright,
Who praise and sing with new delight
Each time a little boy does right.
But,—may be, 'tis my eye lacks sight,—
Like they, I see not so.
I wonder, if *they* know?

And when at church the man up high
Tells all of law and God,
I turn away, and with a sigh
I fall asleep and nod.
And while I dream, I hear him tell,
That naughty boys will go to hell.
He talks, as though he knew it all,—
Held prize and punishment at call.
I search on high,—I search below:—
I wonder how *they* know?

When mother takes me to her knee,
Shows me a picture, and will say:—
“That’s God, who died for you and me.”
Tells me, be good, and always pray;—
And, when I say: I see no God,
I, wondering, feel the rod.
And should I ask where God is hid,
I am to rigid silence bid.
She tells me that He made us men.
“What is He?” I may ask her then;
But she won’t tell,—she angers so.
I wonder, does she know?

In school I’m taught, a book doth hold
The law that I must know and do.
Of many things in it I’m told
That I must take as only true.—
Now, I don’t know how came that book,—
One’s not allowed to even look.
I tried to read a page and failed,—
To read a deeper thought entailed.—
But then my teachers read it through:—
I wonder if they knew.

I puzzle, if, when grown a man,
I’ll know what elders seem to know;
If God and heaven see I can,
Or, if as blind I still must go;
If others’ words my law must be,
Or whether I myself can see.
I cannot guess, how they can tell
That’s there a God, a heaven or hell.
When I am big,—I’m hoping so,—
Like them I’ll know.

PHILOSOPHY OF THE MOTOR-CAR

Yes,—just to get one, I'll strain every nerve;
If small my wage, then let my credit serve.
Some even steal, like gentlemen, or fools,
Some play the race, or stake their all on pools.

And after having, I fritter many a day,
Many a busy hour in giddy joy away.
Work cannot hold me,—I put care aside,
Forget the common-place in joyous ride.

Waste hours the many sum a year;
Of need in helpless age I have no fear.
Of thirty years of active work I'll give
A glad one-third, in my machine to live.

Debt!—bah,—the breeze takes that away.
Life is not work,—'tis all a merry play.
And poverty?—Why rich I am with wealth,
With my machine, fresh air and health.

The very speed that I can make
Will vulgar slowness from me take.
To earn the dollar, at my desk to sit
Makes me for auto-pleasure all but fit.

And then the girls,—they like me better still,
Since my machine they can enjoy at will.
I live my life just three times more as fast.
The barn-yard hour for me's entirely past!—

The clock must strike the fours and fives
Before the motor homeward drives.
Why sleep like dunces hours eight?—
Retire at six and get up late.

I have no time at home my meals to eat:—
A luncheon's all,—perhaps a road-house treat.
For me that is enough;—man eats but just to live,—
Light meals to nerves the proper tension give.

I fly along the road like bird in air:—
Naught for the detail of the scene I care;—
Broad brush-work,—Dutch effects I love:—
A dab of earth, some green, the blue above.

The oil-fed road, you know is just for me.
Let all the shuffling footsters careful be!
They have no right to block my way:—
It matters naught what coroners say.

And if I run down dog or hen,
Or even sometimes reckless men:—
Why don't they promptly clear the way
Before my speed them prostrate lay?

I have no home, no family to 'tend;
On my machine my love I spend.
I wonder, when I die I'll have a grave;—
If that's the end of even an auto-brave?

LES DJINNS

BY VICTOR HUGO

(Translated from the French)

Walls, town,—
And ports,
Asyle
Of death.
Sea gray,
Where play
The winds;—
All sleeps.

On the plain
Stirs a sound,
Such as found
When night breathes.
Lo! it sighs
Like a soul
To its goal
Chased by flame.

Hark! The voice swells
Like far-distant bells.
Of sprites that dance
It's the bold advance.
Silent now:—Then with zest
In rhythmic cadence prance.
On the waves' curved crest
On one foot dance.

The din comes nigh,
Echoes re-tell its sigh.
It's like the rusty bell
Of dungeon-cloister fell;

The voice of angered mobs
With shrieking, thundering sobs.
Then sinks to very naught,
Then swells in new onslaught.

Gods ye!—the burial tones
Of Djinns! What yells, what groans!
Flee 'neath the spiral stair,—
Seek safety in its care.
My lamp is well-nigh spent,—
The shadows in the hall
That creep along the wall
Up to the sky are bent.

Lo!—'tis the horde of Djinns that mass,
And whirl about, and shriek, and pass.
The yew before them bends his spine,
And crackles like a fired pine.
Their lusty herd, pond'rous and fleet
Into the void will not retreat.
It likens well a livid cloud,
Flanked by the lightning as a shroud.

Behold them come!—Hold ever fast,
Defying gate, until they're past.—
What tumult out! Hideous array
Of vampires that with dragons play.
The roof, of massive timber made,
Bends like of grass the flexible blade.
The weighty form of rusty door
Is lifted up, and fears to lose its moor.

Shouts of hell! Voice, to yells and shrieking
scourged,
The demon whirling mass, by Northwind urged.
No doubt, its fury batters down my home,
And of my hearth destroys the arching dome.

The peaceful walls in crumbling moan,
And, lifted up from earth, sink back and groan.
Just like the leaf that summer breath hath dried
Embosomed in the whirl the tempest's will must
 bide.

Prophet, save me, if gracious wilt,
From demon's clutches, with destruction filled;
And I shall homage,—'fore thy shrine bend down
In faith and gratitude my hairless crown.
Make but their fiery breath abate,
And die against this faithful gate.
Let not their horny wings their fury spend,
To chattering, darksome panes destruction send.

They're past! Their savage crowd
Flees on; their heels, not half so loud,
Cease battering at my gate.
Their clamoring blows are now abate.
Though clanking chains the air still fill;—
In near-by woods oaks tremble still,
Bent under fury's reckless might.
A far off clamor mars the night.

Of their distant wings
The flapping barely rings.
On the plains nigh extinct,
Weakly and indistinct,
Like crickets wailing cry,
Dwindled the sound hear I;
Or the patter of hail
On the roof's metal pale.

Strange sounds
Still abound.
Thus the Arab sings
When the tocsin rings

'Mid desert sand
On the still strand.
The child dreams
Of golden streams.

Sepulchral Djinns,
With death the twins,
In the night
Urge their flight.
Their mob howls
With deep growls,
As waves sigh
Hid from eye.

Vague rumbles,
In sleep mumbles
The surf
On the turf.
Dying plaint
Of the saint
O'er the dead.

All's doubt;—
The dark:—
All's past
So fast.
And space
Doth efface
All sound.

VALUES

Now love and honesty are bought,—
Life all encircles gold:—
E'en patriotism can be wrought
In men, for soldiers sold.
We buy the teller, buy the clerk,
We buy the nurse for gold.
The marriage-market shows the work
Of dollars that are told.
Nor faith, nor virtue ever weigh
A farthing on the scale.
And education's halcyon day
Will 'fore the dollar pale.
The plentious purse, the stinting hand,—
How gross, it matters naught,—
Have all the world at their command;—
All else is vainly taught.
And like around the carrion pile
The vultures gather thick,
Around the purse, in double file,
Swarms adulation thick.

I'M BUT HIS WIFE

I pass as rich, but borrow e'er:—
My husband counts a million fair,—
I'm but his wife.

We live in dingy, lonesome flat:—
He gives me just enough for that,—
I'm but his wife.

I am his cook, his laundry miss:—
He sometimes pays me with a kiss,—
I'm but his wife.

They tell me, there is sunshine out,
And many pleasures all about:—
But I'm his wife.

He loves but hard, unsoftened stuff:—
He thinks, for me that is enough,—
I am his wife.

If cook he hired, the cook he'd pay:—
For me the housework is "but play",—
For I'm his wife.

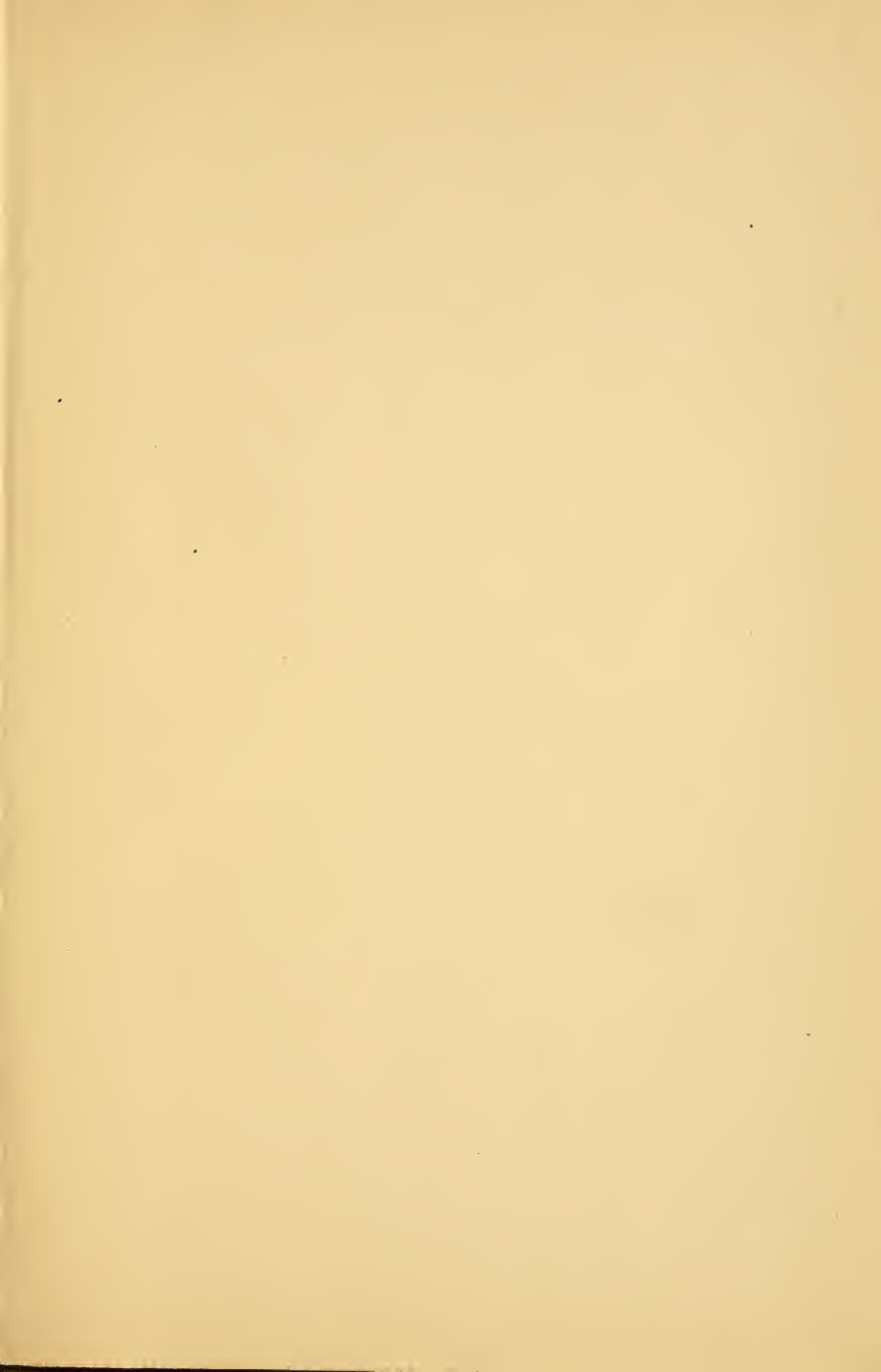
They say, that other people laugh:—
My face is like an epitaph,—
I'm but his wife.

While others friends and soul-mates have
For many a soul-wound healing salve,—
I am his wife.

He goes to meeting ev'ry night,
And leaves the order:—"Burn no light",—
I'm but his wife.

And when he stays an evening here,
"Come, let's to early bed, my dear;"—
I'm but his wife.

And yet he thinks, he's doing right:—
Sees not the tears that cloud my sight.
I'm but his wife!



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